

# Early adulthood

[Psychology](#), [Child Development](#)



Early Adulthood Glenn Johnson CNSL/504 Elizabeth Still April 17, 2012 Early Adulthood Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial human development is one of the best known theories (Cherry, 2011). Erikson's theory explains eight stages of human development, and in each stage an individual experiences a series of challenges and lessons. The eight stages of development includes infancy, early childhood, play age, school age, adolescence, early, middle, and late adulthood. A strong case can be made for each stage for why it is the most important stage in a person's life but I believe early adulthood is the most important stage. In early adulthood, individuals develop into who they are and what they want to become. This paper will include the primary aspects of early adulthood, along with the cognitive, physical, and personality development. This paper will also include health, biological, and transition factors. Early adulthood ranges from 18 to 40 years old. This is the time when most individuals finish school, choose a career path, and start a family. In this stage, an individual's thinking becomes more personal, integrative, and practical in responses to their life experiences and commitment to the responsibilities of career and family. Individuals also begin to realize everything is not always what it seems. Personality development in early adulthood involves self-analysis and identifies issues. Friendships, marriage, and children are often the focus of life during this stage. Physically, individuals have reached their full height, and their limbs are proportional to their size (Feldman, 2008). Late maturers continue to gain height in their early 20s. Individuals tend to be at the peak of their physical capabilities during this stage as well. Individual's reaction time is quicker, muscle strength is greater, and eye-hand coordination is better than

at any other stage in life. The senses are also as sharp as they will ever be at this stage in life. The senses do not begin to deteriorate until the 40s or 50s (Developmental Psychology, n. d.). Health risks are relatively slight during early adulthood. Individuals are less susceptible to minor illnesses like colds than when they were as children. Adults at this stage have a higher risk of dying from an accident, then from health issues. Age 35 is the point that illness and disease overtake accidents as the leading cause of death (Feldman, 2008). Some of the health issues many individuals in this stage struggle with are uncontrollable. Individuals may inherit conditions, such as sickle-cell anemia, hemophilia, and cystic fibrosis (Healthy People, n. d.). During early adulthood, poor decisions, and environmental factors may lead to health issues. For example, alcohol abuse may lead to liver damage, and unprotected sex may lead to transmitted disease. In early adulthood, individuals go through many transition periods. At this point, individuals say goodbye to high school proms and hangouts, and hello to the work world. Puppy love turns into passionate love, and children become parents. In this stage of life, individuals assume multiple roles. Some of these roles include parent, spouse, career professional, and student. Individuals have to transition from role to role as well. For example, a mother working as a correctional officer would have to transition from dealing with criminals at work to playing and loving her children once she is off the clock. Many individuals at this stage in life return to school to seek a better job opportunity. These individuals may have transition into the school schedule and demands. Early adulthood is a very critical time for most individuals. At this stage individuals develop into who they are, and find their purpose in

life. Individuals also lay down the foundation to who they want to be. For instance, a person who works hard, takes care of their family and has invested their money wisely will most likely be better off in the next stage of his or her life than a person who did nothing. In conclusion, I believe early adulthood is the most important stage of an individual's life. At this stage an individual's body has fully developed, and his or her thinking process encompasses mastery and not just of particular bodies of knowledge but of ways of understanding the world. Most individuals are in the prime of their physical capabilities, and their senses are as sharp as ever. Individuals are generally healthy, and have a higher risk of dying in a car accident than by a medical or health condition. Relationships, family, and care are the main focus in life at this point, and those who focus on those responsibilities may be better off in the next stage of life. In early adulthood, individuals develop into who they are and lay down the foundation for who they want to be.

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